

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

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AGRICULTURE

HARRY FARMER'S TALKS.

CXX.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

The oat crop will be almost a complete failure this year. Our own crop started off nicely in the early spring. The land was well prepared and the prospect was for an extra fine crop. But soon after the rain and warm weather in March we noticed some of the bottom blades were turning red or yellow. After a few weeks they improved a little, but as soon as the weather turned off dry they commenced to turn yellow, and growth almost ceased.

THE POOR CONDITION OF OATS.

It is not rust, as some of the newspapers state. Rust will color the hands when rubbed on the blades a smoky color, but we have not found any on our oats. It must be the unusual weather we have had this spring that has caused the trouble. We have been unable to discover any insects about the roots. We think it is about the same thing that affects corn in the summer. A wet spell coming on corn when it is making a rapid growth and is bunching to tassels, and then turns off dry, will make the corn blades turn red and then yellow; it is commonly called "firing," and is apt to produce a very light crop. The same weather that we have had on oats this spring should if come on corn would produce the effects as stated above. Early or fall sown oats are making the best crop and early planted corn is not apt to be injured as much as late plantings.

The failure of the oat crop this year is not going to make us abandon that crop, as we have been succeeding nearly every year for twenty years in making fair crops. Some times failures are necessary in order to make us study crop conditions and by these means make better farmers. Father told us once when we tried a certain business and failed, that we needed some set backs to make us persevere harder next time.

ASSESSING FARMS FOR TAXES

This is tax assessment year. It is the duty of every farmer to see that all property is properly assessed. We have seen some property valued too high while other property worth a great deal more was valued very low. If a farmer has 50 acres of land and 25 in cultivation that is valued at \$500 and his neighbor 125

acres with 60 acres in cultivation with houses in proportion valued at \$800 it is doing him an injustice. The \$800 should be changed to \$1,000 or \$1,100. Because a man has a larger number of acres than his neighbors the valuation should not be reduced on his land any more than on his money in the bank.

Why should land which is the safest investment in the world have such difference in valuation?

We were surprised several years ago when serving as a township assessor to find lands which were exactly alike valued so differently. One little farm was valued at \$15 per acre while adjoining lands were valued from \$2 to \$5. This may have been an extreme case but it would be well to inquire into the valuation placed on your neighbors' property and see that all are treated alike. If every one paid his just part of taxes more money could be raised without increasing the per cent of taxes. There are lands in this State valued at \$1 per acre which readily sell at \$5 per acre. Town and city lots can be found nearly everywhere in the same condition.

HARRY FARMER.

About Raising Cabbage Seed.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

The question asked by your Nash County correspondent in the issue of May 19, 1903, in reference to how to raise cabbage seed in this country to be as good as those we buy, should be answered by some one from about "Blowing Rock" in Watauga County. I was once informed by an enthusiastic cabbage raiser of that county that collard seed from the eastern part of our State planted up there would make hard, solid cabbage heads the first year. That the seed from these cabbages would make cabbage in the east the first year. But these being allowed to run to seed in the east would the second year be collards. If this be so, your question is answered.

JOHN C. SCARBOROUGH.

Chowan Baptist Female Institute, Murfreesboro, N. C.

Durham Sun: The farmers are still complaining of the dry weather and the great need of rain. The Spring of 1903 will long be remembered as one of the most unfavorable that has ever been known in this section. Farm work is almost at a standstill, and crops that are in the ground are suffering severely. Garden products are likewise suffering. Unless rain falls in the near future, crops will be irreparably damaged.

Upland Rice Culture.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

The rice of the Southern States is of more importance than a good many people have any idea of, for it is a very satisfactory crop to grow if properly managed from the start. Land intended for this crop should be well plowed in the spring and allowed to lie for a time untouched so that the soil will get well packed before planting, for rice unlike most crops does best in land that has been plowed for some time before planting the seed. But when ready to plant the crop a cultivator or heavy harrow should be run over the land once each day for the purpose of breaking the crust that has formed since the plowing has been done. After the first working in this way the fertilizer for the crop should be broadcasted and worked into the soil at the next working.

The fertilizer used should be of a high grade to give best results; on an ordinary piney woods land it is advisable to use about 800 pounds per acre of a fertilizer analyzing eight per cent potash, six per cent phosphoric acid and about four per cent nitrogen. A fertilizer of this grade will come high in price, but like most things the most expensive is the cheapest in the end, for liberal treatment with fertilization of all crops is true economy because it insures paying crops and the labor on a well-fertilized crop does not cost any more as on a crop not well fertilized.

The mode of planting the crop differs with the section of where it is grown. In some places where the soil is stiff and very fertile naturally, the seed is broadcasted about two bushels to the acre and harrowed in. The favorite method in most of the Gulf States is to plant in drills thirty inches apart; others plant in hills about ten inches apart in drills about two feet wide. The latter mode I practice entirely now because the crop can be cultivated as its needs demand it and grass and weeds can be kept under control easier where it is in hills than in a continuous drill.

As already stated, this crop on the Southern farm is a very profitable one, and one that hardly ever fails to give good results where conditions are made right by the grower. I say made right, because some farmers by their slipshod methods fail to make a crop of it and then blame the crop whereas the blame lies entirely with the man that made the crop. One very important thing in this

connection is to plant early. Some wait until all other crops are planted and then plant the rice crop. This is altogether wrong; the rice crop should be about the very first to receive attention after spring opens and if planted in April, a second and even a third cutting may be had before frost, and sometimes the second cutting is better than the first. Of course at every cutting a little fertilizer should be applied to keep a backbone as it were in the soil and cultivation and attention should be given it.

The variety to plant is also to be well considered because a good deal depends on this. The old variety that requires from one hundred and thirty to one hundred and sixty days to make a crop is not as profitable as the newer varieties that make in ninety to one hundred days. The Japanese variety is the best all round to plant, for it makes in ninety days and is a small plump grain and more certain to fill than the older and larger grains. We have known crops of rice of these old varieties that never amounted to anything as far as grain was concerned for when the time came for filling out, something was lacking in the soil and hay was all the crop yielded. The best explanation for this state of affairs was an unbalanced fertilizer used, deficiency in potash preventing the grain from filling out or perhaps an excess of phosphoric acid or nitrogen or both.

But this holds true for all crops as well as rice. A properly balanced fertilizer is necessary to give satisfactory results in all cases. The question most often asked in connection with this crop is the yield per acre. To this I would say all depends on conditions, treatment of the crop and the season. Forty bushels per acre is not an uncommon yield but the half of that is a very satisfactory crop taking everything into consideration. At this time of the year a great many inquiries come to hand regarding this crop, and the foregoing are a few remarks on it prompted by these inquiries.

C. K. McQUARRIE.

Winston Sentinel: Discouraging reports are still being received in regard to the wheat crop throughout the Piedmont section. Commissioner of Agriculture Patterson, who was here Monday, stated that he had seen many fields of wheat that would not be worth cutting.